GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(The National Geographic Society is a scientific and educational Society, wholly altruistic, incorporated as a non-commercial institution for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion. General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.)

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NOTE TO TEACHERS—Because of Christmas and New Year's holidays, the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS will not be published during the next two weeks. The BULLETINS will be resumed Monday, January 6, 1941.

Photograph by John Manninger

"BETHLEHEM BOYS" OF HUNGARY EARN CHRISTMAS GIFTS WITH TABLEAUX

Any kitchen in Hungary may become a "little theater" temporarily, while the amateur child actors known as "Bethlehem Boys" make their rounds from house to house. The average troupe includes angels in pointed caps with paper streamers, shepherds in shaggy sheepskin coats borrowed from their fathers, solemn little Wise Men in hemp beards, and sheeted youngsters carrying be-horned animal heads to represent "flocks." Around their portable Bethlehem stable, they re-enact in simple dialogue the Bible story of Christmas. Then their hosts reward the children with small presents in one of the child world's most colorful Christmas celebrations (Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic News Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers in the United States and its possessions for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (stamps or money order); in Canada, 50 cents. Entered as second-class matter, Jan. 27, 1922, Post Office, Washington, D. C., under act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of Oct 3, 1917, authorized Feb. 9, 1922. Copyright, 1940, by National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C. International copyright secured. All rights reserved. Quedan reservados todos los derechos.

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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Santa Claus's International Family

WHILE the children of the United States look forward confidently and starry-eyed to the imminent arrival of Santa Claus, anxious youngsters in warring countries on both sides of the battle lines are wondering about their chances of attention from their respective Christmas saints.

Will St. Basil find his way through the clutter of tanks and guns to solace the children of Greece? Will the *Julenisse* evade the German army of occupation and creep into Norwegian homes to leave the Christmas gifts and claim his porridge in the barn? Will Père Noël with a toy pack on his back have a passport for travel in France? Will St. Nicholas, Knecht Rupert, grandmotherly old Befana, Kriss Kringle, or any of the other embodiments of Christmas generosity be barred by blockade or air raid from the children who eagerly await them?

Befana Has Been Called Santa Claus's Wife

For Santa Claus by any other name is just as welcome, and the guises are numerous under which that spirit of Christmas mystery appears in different countries. His jolly round red little brother is the *Julenisse* of Norway, the "Christmas elf," who, with a peaked red cap and a pointed white beard framing his gnomish face, leaves presents for children under their Christmas tree at dusk on Christmas Eve.

Almost a twin of the *Julenisse* is Sweden's *Jul Tomte,* who piles wrapped presents in the Christmas basket, or throws them mysteriously in at the door, and leaves the straw *julbok,* or Christmas toy goat from Thor's chariot, for every child.

One of the rare womenfolk of Santa Claus's family is Befana, the old woman who fills the stockings of Italian children. Some call her Santa Claus's wife. Others explain that she is more probably a centuries-old friend of the Three Wise Men whom the Bible forgot to mention. When the Magi invited her to accompany them to Bethlehem, she hesitated, then changed her mind. But she neither caught up with them nor found her way to Bethlehem; instead, she has wandered about in search of children with whom she can leave her gifts. A factor strengthening this belief is the time of her arrival—not exactly at Christmas, but twelve days later at Epiphany, January 6, when the Magi reached Bethlehem.

Krampus Punishes the Bad for Saint Nicholas

A mysterious sister of Santa Claus, dressed in angelic white, is reported from time to time in eastern Europe on Christmas Eve, from Sicily north to Poland. Sometimes she is identified with the Russian *Kolyada,* a sun spirit riding in a sleigh attended by singing girls. Elsewhere she is the Polish "Good Star," who leaves the children their "little star"—a gift of toys, cakes, and candy.

The Magi themselves perform Santa Claus's duties in Spain, dropping presents into children's shoes left on the doorstep at Epiphany, to climax the Christmas season. As Spanish beliefs were spread through that country's former empire, there are numerous Latin American children who anticipate a visit from the Wise Men instead of from Santa Claus. Where the domains of the Magi border St. Nick's realm, however, as in Puerto Rico, some children receive gifts from all. Through the United States, Santa has even crossed the Equator (illustration, next page).

One of the strangest medleys of festival traditions is found in the Philippines, where a very foreign Santa Claus arrives in a native dugout canoe, and finds Filipino homes decorated with paper lanterns borrowed from the lantern festivals of China and Japan. A boat takes him to Alaska too—a steamer making an annual tour from Seattle to Alaskan ports.

UMI

Photograph by Popper from European Picture Service

DOUBLE HIGH TIDES BRING DOUBLE SHIPPING TO SOUTHAMPTON IN PEACETIME

The Isle of Wight, lying between the English Channel and the harbor of Southampton, divides the tides, so that the high tide flowing into the harbor arrives two hours later from one side of the island than from the other, and prolongs the conveniences of high water for that length of time. Largest transatlantic liners consequently have more time to dock in this important port on the center of England's Channel coast. For this reason, and also because Southampton is directly opposite the mouth of the Seine River and convenient for shipping between Paris and London, the port has been a center for sea and air lines of western Europe. Cranes stand at intervals along the miles of quays, in front of dark rectangles of dock sheds, beside basins large enough for several giant ocean liners at the same time (center background). In peacetime, tangled skeins of railway lines (right) here meet ship passengers who want the next "boat train" for London. Before the war, ocean liners of the air made Southampton harbor also a hub for Imperial Airways planes and Pan American Airways (Bulletin No. 2).

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Each British Port Plays Special Commercial Rôle

WITH attacks on Bristol, Southampton, Liverpool, and Plymouth, Germany's air war on England has taken a turn toward ports as targets, thereby threatening the nation's food supply and commercial balance.

Every port in normal times plays a special rôle in Britain's economic life. Six ports usually handle 75 per cent of all its foreign trade—London and Liverpool first and second, with more than half; and Hull, Manchester, Southampton, and Glasgow completing the half dozen. But smaller ports also are important.

Two-Thirds of Imports Through Eastern Ports

The southeast ports have been equipped to handle the English Channel ferry services, for passengers and perishable foods. Through the eastern ports England normally receives food from the North Sea fisheries and from Scandinavia, as well as such raw materials as timber and iron ore; nearly two-thirds of the country's imports have arrived on the east. The western ports ordinarily export British manufactures to foreign markets, four of them handling 40 per cent of all exports.

London, as the cornerstone of English trade, has been unique in the immenseness of its port activities, but has resembled the other eastern ports in its preponderance of imports (illustration, next page). In a sample year, the nation used to look to London for between 40 and 50 per cent of all its imported meat, butter, eggs, wool, and paper; 80 per cent of its rubber; 90 per cent of its tea.

The southeastern ports grew up as England's doorsill. Direct trains from London connected with English Channel packet boats at Harwich on the east coast, with Dover and Folkestone on the southeastern knob opposite Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne in France; with Newhaven opposite Dieppe; and with Southampton (illustration, inside cover) across from Le Havre and Cherbourg. With the stream of passengers ferried into these specially equipped Channel ports came rush shipments of garden delicacies, fresh meat, Paris fashions, and Belgian diamonds or other valuables.

"Export" Coast Faces New World

Other Channel ports of importance are Portsmouth, just east of Southampton, and Plymouth, well toward the western end of the Channel, which combine with their port facilities the function of Royal Dockyards for turning out warships.

Britain's east, or normally "importing," coast is dominated north of London by three shipping centers—the ports around the River Humber, the northeastern ports beside the Tyne and Tees, and Scotland's eastern metropolis, Edinburgh, with Leith as its outport. Hull and Grimsby on the Humber, with the younger port of Goole, 25 miles up the river, used to receive much of the North Sea fisheries' yield, Scandinavian bacon and butter, and such raw materials as timber and iron ore for factories in their Yorkshire hinterland. Hull, short for Kingston-on-Hull, the nation's third-ranking port, also imported oil seeds in record quantities.

"Carrying coals to Newcastle" from neighboring mines started the Tyneside ports, the east coast's largest cluster of cities. These include Newcastle-on-Tyne, Hebburn, and South Shields. With Sunderland and Middlesbrough to the south, these ports carry on a shipbuilding industry which produces more than 40 per cent of Britain's new ships. Shipbuilding is all-important too in Scotland's leading port, Glasgow, on the River Clyde in the west. With shipyards that have been called the best-equipped in the world, Glasgow has averaged more than a third of the output of British-built merchant vessels exceeding 100 tons.

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Mexican children under Spanish rule had gifts from the Magi, but in addition modern Mexicans have Santa Claus and Quetzalcoatl. The latter, a pre-Christian Aztec god of the winds, with a plumed headdress, has recently been introduced as presiding genius of the Christmas fiesta.

St. Basil, benevolent early Christmas father whose name is honored on January 1 by the Greeks, leaves presents for Greek children at that time. But recent American influence has started Santa Claus swapping places with him.

St. Nicholas, a benign bearded bishop riding a white horse, started visiting good children over much of Europe on December 6, the day awarded him in the church calendar; his comic servant, Krampus, accompanied him to punish naughty ones. (The original St. Nicholas lived in what is now Turkey in the 4th century.) Many European youngsters attribute their Christmas Eve toys to the *Christkindl* (German for "Christ Child," from which Kriss Kringle evolved, as Santa Claus came from mispronunciations of St. Nicholas). Other Christmas gift-givers are Knecht Rupert, the fur-coated little old knight, sometimes represented with a black face, and Pelsnichol, the ugly "furry Nicholas," who brings switches.

Bulletin No. 1, December 16, 1940.

Photograph by Luis Marden

BRAZIL WELCOMES A SANTA CLAUS TO A TROPICAL CHRISTMAS

Department stores promoting their Christmas sales have introduced the Santa Claus motif, regardless of geographical situation. This papier-mâché embodiment of northern Europe's Christmas saint walks the streets of São Paulo, in tropical Brazil, advertising, in Portuguese, the merchandise of Casa Godinho. He is represented as wearing a furred robe and warm hood despite the fact that Christmas comes during Brazil's summer.

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Soldiers in Skirts: The Evzones of Greece

DISPATCHES reporting spectacular victories for Greece's colorful mountain troops have referred frequently to the evzones, who wear the pleated, ballet-skirted *fustanella* (illustration, next page).

This strange outfit, appearing effeminate to the stranger's eye, is one of the characteristic national costumes of the modern Hellenes. It is now attracting, in the military lore of the present war, a surprised attention comparable to that inspired during the first World War by the tartan plaid kilt of Scotland's formidable "Ladies from Hell."

Skirts Add Prestige

A familiar sight to visitors in Athens, the sprucely uniformed evzones stand guard before the king's residence, at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and at the Ministry of War. Clad in their stiff skirts of white linen or cotton, in short embroidered sleeveless jackets, long white woolen hose held up by suspenders, tasseled fezzes, and heelless red leather pumps with pompons on the tapering toes, these special troops belie the apparent femininity of their trim costume. Selected for his stature, looks, and military bearing, an *evzonaki* of the Royal Guard enjoys much greater prestige than the ordinary soldier.

Of course, with the exception of this colorful group, the Greek Army as a whole is predominantly dressed in a conventional type of military uniform.

Name of Greek Military Skirt Came from Egypt

The evzones (from the Greek for "well girdled") owe their name to the snug belt to which their flaring skirt is attached. The billowing white *fustanella* is made of 47 triangular double pieces of fabric gathered to the broad girdle. Originally it was cut from yards and yards of fustian, the stiff white Egyptian textile of cotton and linen combined. Through fustian, the name of the Greek soldier's short skirt can be traced across the Mediterranean to Cairo, in whose suburb, Fustat, the cloth was made.

For dress wear and in summer, the fluffy fustanella is worn without a coat. But in winter, for campaigning in wet and snowy weather, a heavy blue or khaki half-length overcoat—the tunic kilt—tightly belted and with a generous flare in its short skirt, is worn over the *fustanella*. The complete winter uniform looks like a more businesslike version of the voluminous white "petticoat."

Fustanella First a Peasant Costume before Joining the Army

The Hellenic kilt has been the traditional garb of the peasants of northwestern Greece for centuries.

In recent years, there have been five regular regiments of evzones in the Greek Army, mostly recruited from the up-and-down mountainous section where the costume is commonest for everyday wear. Organized as light infantry rifle units, these regiments of evzones excel at the type of guerilla warfare which started raging in the rugged terrain of the Greek-Albanian frontier as soon as the Italian invasion attempt began.

Trained snipers, these independent mountaineers know every strategic nook and cranny in their rough native land. Their instinctive use of whatever scrap of cover the country may afford is partly a "hangover" from days when bandit groups roamed the region. Years of shepherding their flocks in the highlands have made them familiar with the ways of woodcraft and outdoor life under all conditions, and have provided in effect a form of semi-military training.

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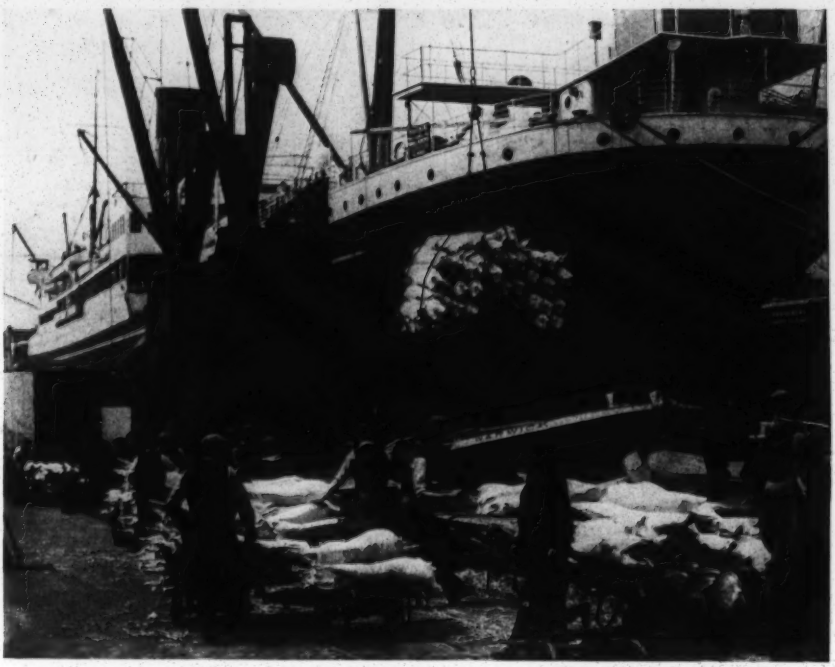
Britain's west coast ports have profited by facing the New World, since slavery days when Liverpool and Bristol ships sailed to Africa for human cargo to exchange in the West Indies for rum, tobacco, cotton, and molasses. Liverpool used to receive three-fourths of the nation's imports of cotton. With 36 miles of quays and landing stages, the city employed a quarter of Britain's sailors and shipped a quarter of her exports. Inland Manchester, by virtue of a 35-mile canal, is the nation's fourth-ranking port.

Wales contributes three ports to the handling of Britain's commerce—Holyhead, Swansea, and Cardiff (the greatest coal port in the British Empire). The only other western port of comparable importance is Bristol, well situated for receiving the West Indies banana boats—a peacetime Bristol specialty.

Note: Additional descriptions and photographs of England's ports will be found in "Britain Just before the Storm," and "Along England's Harassed Coast" (duotone series), *National Geographic Magazine*, August, 1940; "Southampton—Gateway to London," January, 1940; "Time and Tide on the Thames," February, 1939; "Pilgrims Still Stop at Plymouth," July, 1938; "As London Toils and Spins," January, 1937; "Great Britain on Parade," August, 1935; "When the Herring Fleet Comes to Great Yarmouth," August, 1934; "Vagabonding in England," March, 1934; "Between the Heather and the North Sea," February, 1933; "Some Forgotten Corners of London," February, 1932; and "Tour in the English Fenland," May, 1929.

British seaports may be located on the Modern Pilgrim's Map of the British Isles, which is available at 50c (paper) and $1.00 (linen).

Bulletin No. 2, December 16, 1940.



Photograph by B. Anthony Stewart

MEAT IMPORTS REINFORCE ENGLAND'S "MUSCLE LINE" OF DEFENSE

Food to keep soldiers and civilians healthy is a defense need which the ports must fill, since substantial quantities of Britain's provisions are supplied from overseas. With ample cold storage facilities, London normally is the port of entry of half the imported meat. A typical scene is the unloading of tons of mutton, from Argentina or Australia, at the Royal Albert Dock, on the Thames. Some meat is deposited on the small boats (right, in front of ship) and lightered directly to riverside warehouses. In addition to food staples, London has storage and marketing facilities for import oddities such as dried monkey skins, ambergris, "dragon's blood" resin, and turtle shell.

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Northern Ireland Aids Britain with Field and Factory

FOR the first time since the separation from Eire 20 years ago, Northern Ireland has a new Premier. The recently appointed official, John M. Andrews, replaces the late Viscount Craigavon, who had been the only governor until his death last month.

Northern Ireland consists of six of the nine counties of the old Irish province of Ulster, a name familiar as applied to a kind of long loose overcoat cut from material manufactured in the region.

Northern Ireland's Representatives in British Parliament

In 1920, when most of Ireland was demanding home rule, the island's six predominantly Protestant northeastern counties (Antrim, Down, Armagh, Fermanagh, Londonderry, and Tyrone) remained part of the United Kingdom instead of becoming a Protestant minority in a Catholic Ireland. (The three other Ulster counties became part of Eire.) With its own Parliament, Northern Ireland bears a relation to Britain's United Kingdom like that of one of the United States to the Federal Government. Northern Ireland sends 13 members to the British House of Commons.

Its people are known as Orangemen (after their early champion, William III of Orange). But Ulster's countryside is no less green than that of Eire to the south. It spreads a varied pattern of fertile valley acres, stony upland fields, purple mountain moorlands, islet-strewn lakes, and bold rocky shores over an area a little larger than Connecticut's (map, next page). Of the two chief lakes, Lough Erne and Lough Neagh, the latter is the largest lake in the British Isles.

Nine U. S. Presidents of Ulster Stock

The metallic din of riveting and the daylong clatter of looms are the characteristic voices of both Belfast, the capital, and Londonderry (Derry), where the vital shipbuilding and linen industries of Northern Ireland are concentrated. Belfast, with more than a third of the country's total of 1,280,000 people, is a familiar port of call, in normal times, for many of the steamers plying between Liverpool and Glasgow and North America. Her huge shipyards have fashioned many a famous ocean liner; there was launched the ill-fated *Titanic*. As many as 20,000 men have been employed at Belfast at one time in building ships.

Linen weaving, however, is Ulster's biggest industry. Approximately 70,000 people (apart from those engaged in raising flax) are employed in linen making. Some 900,000 spindles and 28,000 looms turn out almost all of the linens exported from the whole United Kingdom. Other North Irish manufactures include aircraft, machinery, tobacco, whiskey, biscuits, and ropes and twines.

Potatoes, oats, and hay are the staple crops of the innumerable small farms, along with other grains, flax, turnips, and a variety of vegetables.

Old stone crosses, crumbled abbeys, castles, and round towers, and curious dolmens are history's fingerprints on Northern Ireland. County Antrim has yielded the oldest relics of man yet found in the island.

Ulster has firm ties with the United States. In pre-Revolutionary days, Ulstermen by tens of thousands, oppressed by their landlords, fled to America. Presidents Jackson, Polk, Buchanan, Johnson, Grant, Arthur, Cleveland, McKinley, and Wilson were all of Ulster stock.

Northward from Belfast, for nearly 100 miles along the Antrim coast, runs

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Note: Additional data about the evzones, as well as other phases of Greek life, have appeared in "Modern Odyssey in Classic Lands," *National Geographic Magazine*, March, 1940; and "New Greece, the Centenarian, Forges Ahead," December, 1930.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "Greece and Italy, Now First-Time Modern Foes," December 9, 1940; "Crete: Greek Key to Mediterranean Naval Strategy," December 2, 1940; "Embattled Greece, Where History Repeats Itself," November 18, 1940; "Corfu, Watchdog of the Adriatic, Has Fallen to Many Conquerors," May 1, 1939; "Corinth, City of Resurrections," December 9, 1935; "Greece Dusts Off Her Throne," November 4, 1935; "Navarino Is Famous in Grecian History," October 21, 1935.

Bulletin No. 3, December 16, 1940.

SEPARATE COLOR PICTURES OF GREECE

Twenty-two natural color photographs of Greece are included in a list of separate color pictures from the *National Geographic Magazine*. This list will be furnished upon request. The color pictures are available in packets of 48 sheets at 30c and 96 sheets at 50c.

Photograph by B. Anthony Stewart

THE "FUSTANELLA BALLET" CAN BE A DANCE OF DEATH

The swirl of skirts indicates nothing more formal than a ring of off-duty evzones relaxing in an impromptu ballet for sport. That the *fustanella*, or ballet-style military skirt, may betoken grimmer business is attested by the fate of Italian invaders who attempted to break through Greece's defenses. Fancy garters below the knee are for decoration only, as the long wool stockings are held up by suspenders. Lord Byron, the English poet, who died in 1824 while aiding Greece's struggle for independence from Turkey, wrote a war song for the Greek soldiers, and his fellow crusader for Greek liberty, swashbuckling Edward Trelawny, actually adopted their costume.

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French-Governed Levant States, "Sunrise Land" of History

THE recent death in an air battle of a new High Commissioner to Syria calls attention to that turbulent French mandate of the eastern Mediterranean, and to its sharp changes in status following France's capitulation to Germany.

Although popularly known as Syria, this region of French influence in the Middle East is officially organized into the Levant States, comprising the Republics of Syria and Latakia, and the Governments of Lebanon and Jebel Ed Druz. The 3,600,000 people of the Levant States are colorfully assorted descendants of Phoenicians who taught the alphabet throughout the Mediterranean, of Saracens who fought off medieval Crusaders, of Assassins who practiced murder religiously, and of Hittites who furnished wives to Old Testament heroes.

Visited by Jesus

This historic sector of the Levant, the "Sunrise Land" (from French for "rising," with the implication of "rising sun"), covers some 57,900 square miles of rocky sea coast and inland desert, an area the size of Michigan. Yet within its limits flourished such varied cultures as Queen Zenobia's palmy empire of Palmyra (now mostly desert), and the seafaring kingdom of the Phoenicians who sold cedars of Lebanon to King Solomon for his temple at Jerusalem and collected cargoes of "gold, and silver, and ivory, and apes, and peacocks."

The coastal strip is divided into Lebanon in the south, dominated by the ancient city of Beyrouth which now is the region's chief port; and Latakia, once a stronghold of the drugged, murderous Assassins. Hatay, adjoining Latakia on the north, was turned over to Turkey last year. Most of the interior goes to make up Syria, by far the largest of the Levant States, with the rugged patch of Jebel Ed Druz set off in the region's southernmost extension.

Syria, with more than one and a half million people, covers only a part of the vast Syria of Biblical days. Within its area, however, are still found many of the historical centers of the Bible: Damascus, now the capital, often called the world's oldest inhabited city; Alep (Aleppo), traditionally visited by Abraham and named for his "dappled cow." After 40 centuries of Eastern ways Alep is adopting Western motor cars and ice boxes, permanent waves, and French café life.

Lebanon also has its quota of Biblical sites, including Baalbek, the city built by Cain, according to Arab legend; the shore on which the whale coughed up Jonah; and Saida, the city which Jesus visited on his most northerly journey. From the Phoenician port of Byblos came the word "Bible"—first meaning "book of papyrus"—because of the quantities of papyrus it exported.

Neighboring Countries, Once Allies, Now Aloof

How much of the Levant States is uninhabited desert is shown by a glance at the map, with its wide-open spaces in the east, dotted only by an occasional town. By contrast, innumerable towns crowd each other along the seacoast.

Under Turkish rule before the World War, Syria was placed under French mandate in 1920. Its widely assorted inhabitants—chiefly Moslems, with about half a million Christians, and including Arabs, Greeks, Jews, and Turks—have been promised eventual independence.

According to a treaty of friendship and alliance, signed in 1936 by France and Syria, the Near East country was to receive its autonomy three years after ratification. The Syrians immediately ratified this treaty, but the French have so far not

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Northern Ireland's own "Corniche Drive," skirting cliffs and waterfalls, hurdling mountains, and rarely passing beyond the sound of the sea surf. From this highway is reached the renowned Giant's Causeway, a honeycomb of about 40,000 basalt stone columns, broken off so evenly in some places as to resemble paving blocks. Not far away is Rathlin Island, where Robert Bruce is supposed to have learned the famous lesson of patience from the spider.

Note: Northern Ireland is described in "Mist and Sunshine of Ulster," *National Geographic Magazine*, November, 1935; and "Ireland: The Rock Whence I Was Hewn," March, 1927.

Bulletin No. 4, December 16, 1940.

Drawn by Newman Bumstead and Ralph E. McAlcer

THE ORANGEMEN'S NORTHERN IRELAND HAS A NON-ATLANTIC COASTLINE

In the southwest, a strip of Eire (Irish Free State) cuts off County Fermanagh in Northern Ireland from Donegal Bay. The land of the Orangemen has a deeply indented coastline curving from Lough Foyle in the north to Carlingford Lough on the Irish Sea in the east, but none of its inlets are close enough to the Atlantic to furnish bases for adequately combatting German operations against British shipping. The famous linen industry of Northern Ireland is attributed to Huguenot weavers who took refuge there from France after 1685.

done so. Despite a number of nationalist riots and political crises in Syria in 1939, the problem has been tabled for future consideration. In the meantime, treaty provisions permit France to operate air bases and maintain military forces in Syria, while the Syrian Army employs French instructors.

When France was an ally of Great Britain, Syria was in a comparatively sheltered geographic position. In contact on the east and south with the cooperating nations, Iraq, Trans-Jordan, and Palestine—all under the influence or mandate of Britain—and bounded on the north by Turkey, friendly to the Allies, Syria was further protected on the west by the big British island of Cyprus. Still other friendly British forces were stationed within neighborly range at the entrance to the Suez Canal, on the southwest.

Today, with its new status as a partially German-controlled area, the French mandate finds itself surrounded by states that are unfriendly to any government under Italian or German domination. One indication of the change is found in the report that the Syrian branch of the great oil pipe line, through which petroleum formerly flowed from Iraq to the Mediterranean port of Tripoli, has been shut off in Iraq by the British.

Note: See also "Along the Old Silk Routes," *National Geographic Magazine*, October, 1940; "Change Comes to Bible Lands," December, 1938; "Road of the Crusaders," December, 1933; "Secrets from Syrian Hills," July, 1933; "Crusader Castles of the Near East," March, 1931; "New Alphabet of the Ancients Is Unearthed," October, 1930; "Skirting the Shores of Sunrise," December, 1926; and "Syria: The Land Link of History's Chain," November, 1919.

Syria appears on The Society's Map of Europe and the Near East, which is available at 50c (paper) and 75c (linen). It is also shown in more detail on The Society's Map of Bible Lands, with historical annotations and seven small inset maps showing such special phases as economic development of the region.

Bulletin No. 5, December 16, 1940.

Photograph by Maynard Owen Williams

BEEHIVE HOMES HOUSE SWARMS OF KURDS, ISMAILIANS, AND ALAOUITES

The swampy plain of western Syria between Alep (Aleppo) and Hama, which the only railway of the Levant States crosses from north to south, is dotted with curious villages, in which each room is shaped like an old-fashioned beehive. A household consists of a collection of the conical structures, including smaller ones for store rooms in addition to the living quarters, surrounded by a wall. In the absence of timber from the deforested plain, houses are built of sun-baked mud bricks, plastered over with mud. In summer, some inhabitants move into cooler temporary dwellings with roofs of branches. Along with the Syrians, Kurds, Greeks, and Turks inhabiting the plain are villages of people set apart by their religious beliefs, notably the Moslem sects of the Ismailians and Alaouites.